

REMARKS

This paper is submitted in response to the non-final Office Action mailed September 29, 2008, and is accompanied by a petition for a one-month extension of time. The petition fee has been paid by credit card.

The Office Action made the following objections/rejections to the pending claims:

(a) claims 1 and 4-6 were objected to for various informalities;

(b) claims 1, 2, 6, 7, and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Robinson (U.S. Patent No. 6,376,563);

(c) claims 1, 2, and 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Ven Erden (U.S. Patent No. 6,288,131);

(d) claims 3, 12, and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Robinson; and

(e) claims 4 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Robinson in view of Van Erden.

Applicants note that while the cover page of the Office Action identifies claim 11 as rejected, the body of the document provides no support or discussion regarding this rejection.

By the foregoing, claims 1, 2, and 4-7 are currently amended. Claims 8-11 are canceled. Claims 1, 2, and 4-7 are amended to overcome the objections set forth in the Office Action, as well as to better conform with preferred U.S. format. Claim 1 is also amended to recite the language of now canceled claim 11, which is also disclosed in paragraph [0007] of the originally-filed application. No new matter is added.

The present invention is directed to a method for reprocessing used PET bottles. The method includes shredding the bottles to yield plastic flakes. The plastic flakes are then sorted according to at least one criterion into at least two partial quantities. Then, each of the at least two partial quantities are subject to an industrial reprocessing treatment. Claim 1 is amended herein to specifically define the industrial reprocessing treatment as including at least one decontamination treatment. Neither Robinson nor Van Erden alone, or in combination, disclose or suggest such combination of features.

Specifically, neither Robinson nor Van Erden, alone or in combination, discloses or suggests (1) a PET reprocessing treatment including at least one decontamination treatment

or (2) a treatment of at least two partial quantities of sorted materials, as recited in amended claim 1.

Robinson discloses a process for preparing a PET flake mixture for use in manufacturing high performance plastic strapping. The process includes first removing PVC and aluminum materials from PET materials. The PET materials are then chopped into flakes and chunks. The chunks are removed from the flakes. The flakes undergo an industrial treatment that namely includes a solid state polymerization. *See*, column 4, line 36 to column 5, line 48. This industrial treatment does not include a decontamination treatment.

Similar to Robinson, Van Erden also discloses a process for preparing a PET flake mixture for use in manufacturing high performance plastic strapping. First, the method includes shredding the PET-based article, which contains impurities such as PVC, PP, PE, and paper. Then, the materials are subject to a flotation segregation process that serves to separate the PE, PP, and paper material components from the PET and PVC material components. *See*, column 5, lines 18-47. The PET and PVC material components are then preheated and flattened. Subsequently, browned PVC flakes are identified by a camera and discharged via, for example, an air blast. The PET material components then undergo a solid state polymerization. *See*, column 6, line 58 to column 7, line 41. Van Erden does not disclose a decontamination treatment of the PET material components.

Thus, neither Robinson nor Van Erden discloses a reprocessing treatment of PET that includes at least one decontamination treatment, as recited in amended claim 1. Moreover, there is no suggestion to modify Robinson or Van Erden to include at least one decontamination treatment because the PET material in each of these references explicitly undergoes a solid state polymerization.

In addition to the prior art failing to disclose or suggest a reprocessing treatment including a decontamination treatment, Robinson and Van Erden further fail to disclose or suggest treating partial quantities of sorted material with an industrial reprocessing treatment, as recited in amended claim 1.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding anticipation and obviousness rejections are respectfully requested.

The Director is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in the fees filed, asserted to be filed, or which should have been filed wherewith (or with any paper hereafter filed in this application by this firm) to our Deposit Account No. 13-2855, under Order No. 30071/41841.

Applicants respectfully request examination on the merits and timely allowance of the still-pending claims.

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Respectfully submitted,

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